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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION:
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Conor Murphy (Ireland), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.25

Science and technology for development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the continuing validity of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, 1/ and recalling the relevant paragraphs of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, 2/ the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, 3/ the Cartagena Commitment, 4/ adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session, the relevant recommendations and decisions adopted by the United Nations Conference

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1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1979 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and corrigenda), chap. VII.

2/ Resolution S-18/3, annex.

3/ Resolution 45/199, annex.

4/ See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Eighth Session, Report and Annexes (TD/364/Rev.1) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.II.D.5), part one, sect. A.

on Environment and Development, particularly those contained in Agenda 21, 5/ and the relevant resolutions and decisions adopted by organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerning science and technology for development,

Bearing in mind the vital contribution of science and technology, including new and emerging technologies, to the promotion of economic growth and development, particularly in developing countries, and stressing the importance of monitoring new developments in science and technology and their implications for society, on production, employment and international competitiveness, especially for developing countries,

Recognizing the importance for developing countries of having access to science and technology so as to enhance their productivity and competitiveness in the world market, and stressing the need to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and the corresponding know-how, in particular to the developing countries, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries,

Stressing the primary responsibility of all countries for their own science and technology policies, and the need to further promote endogenous capacity-building in science and technology in developing countries so as to enable them to participate in, benefit from and contribute to the rapid advances in science and technology,

Recognizing that information technologies are important requisites for planning, development and decision-making in science and technology, and recognizing also their far-reaching implications for society,

Recognizing the importance of developing countries' own efforts in the field of science and technology for development,

Reaffirming that the United Nations should play an important role in the promotion of cooperation in science and technology, and in the enhancement of support and assistance to developing countries in their efforts to achieve the objectives set forth by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in this regard,

Recognizing the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in promoting the developing countries' endogenous capacity in science and technology, and recognizing its unique function as a global forum for the examination of science and technology questions, for the improvement of the understanding of science and technology policies for development and for the formulation of recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system, all in relation to development,

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5/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

Recognizing the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in science and technology for development, as reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 48/179 of 21 December 1993,

Recognizing the need for adequate resources to be devoted to fostering science and technology for development,

Recognizing the special needs and requirements of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, especially those in Africa,

Also recognizing the relevant problems of countries with economies in transition in the sphere of the transformation and development of their scientific and technological potentials,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of programme 17 (Science and technology for development) of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, 6/

1. Reaffirms the relevant resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 on the basis of the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its second session; 7/

2. Reaffirms that capacity-building in science and technology in developing countries should remain a priority issue in the United Nations agenda, and urges that international cooperation efforts be intensified and strengthened towards developing countries' endogenous capacity-building in science and technology, including their capacity to utilize scientific and technological developments from abroad as well as to modify and adapt them to suit local conditions;

3. Calls upon the international community to meet all the objectives affirmed in chapter 34 of Agenda 21, 5/ in particular those dealing with effective access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including new and emerging technologies and publicly owned technologies, to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries, so as to contribute to enabling those developing countries to meet their development-related challenges;

4. Stresses that it is important for developing countries to adopt and implement their own science and technology policies that support the national effort to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development in the light of their respective national conditions, needs, priorities and objectives;

6/ A/50/649.

7/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 11 (E/1995/31).

5. Stresses the need to strengthen the vital role of the United Nations in the field of science and technology, particularly through effective policy guidance and better coordination, including in international cooperation in technology assessment, monitoring and forecasting;

6. Recognizes the role of the private sector in science and technology for development, in particular in the transfer and development of science and technology capabilities;

7. Also recognizes the role of Governments in science and technology for development, in particular in providing appropriate regulatory frameworks and incentives for the development of science and technology capabilities;

8. Requests the relevant organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations, in the spirit of coordination that should prevail in the activities of the United Nations system in the field of science and technology for development, to work in a coordinated manner to develop a catalogue of proved technologies that will enable developing countries to make effective choices from among state-of-the-art technologies;

9. Calls upon the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development to interact more effectively, through the Economic and Social Council, in carrying out their respective mandates;

10. Calls upon the supporting secretariats of the Commission on Science and Technology and the Commission on Sustainable Development to improve their interaction;

11. Takes note of the developments at the Consultative Meeting on a Coalition of Resources for Science and Technology for Development and welcomes the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development should provide a forum for exchanging views and interaction among partners of different networks and coordination schemes;

12. Reaffirms the need for adequate financial resources on a continuous and assured basis to foster science and technology for development, in particular to promote endogenous capacity-building in developing countries in accordance with their priorities;

13. Notes with appreciation the measures taken by the Secretary-General in response to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 48/179 and invites him to continue to take all necessary measures, including to explore the possibility of organizing a more effective coalition of resources within the United Nations development system, multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks and bilateral funding agencies to ensure the full implementation of programme 17, Science and technology for development, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and the activities planned for 1996-1997 in the field of science and technology for development, in accordance with specific mandates provided for in the relevant Assembly resolutions;

14. Takes note that enhanced cooperation could help focus the activities of the United Nations system in the field of science and technology for development so that they would have a greater impact;

15. Recognizes the importance of cooperation among developing countries in the field of science and technology, building on their complementarities, and the need of further advancing such cooperation through the establishment and/or the strengthening of national technology and information centres in developing countries and their networking on regional, subregional and interregional and global levels to promote technology research, training and dissemination as well as joint projects in developing countries, and urges the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and programmes to provide continued and enhanced support, through technical assistance and financing for such efforts;

16. Requests the relevant organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to continue to promote the development of effective and mutually beneficial technological cooperation between countries with economies in transition and all other countries, including in the area of new and emerging technologies;

17. Notes the endorsement by the Economic and Social Council of the decision of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to select information technologies as the main substantive theme of its work during the inter-sessional period 1995-1997 and to set up panels and/or working groups to analyse, and elaborate and make recommendations on issues pertaining to information technologies and their implications for development;

18. Takes note of the decision of the Economic and Social Council to invite the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to consider ways and means for the formulation of a common vision regarding the future contribution of science and technology for development, taking advantage of the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, held at Vienna in 1979;

19. Stresses the potentially important role that the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development should play in enhancing endogenous capacity-building in science and technology in developing countries, and calls on all countries in a position to so to contribute generously to the Fund;

20. Reaffirms the need for Governments, regional and international bodies to take measures to ensure women that women have equal access to and equal opportunity to participate in scientific and technological areas, especially in areas where they are not represented or are underrepresented;

21. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.